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Platt to lead IMB



IMB LEADER — Newly-elected International Mission Board President David Platt (fourth from left) and his wife Heather, (second from left) pose with their four children (from left): Joshua, Isaiah, Mara Ruth, and Caleb. Platt was elected Aug. 27 by board trustees to succeed Tom Elliff, who is retiring. (BP photo)

Birmingham pastor to take office immediately

ROCKVILLE, Va. (BP) — Alabama pastor David Platt was elected president of the Southern Baptist International Mission Board (IMB) Aug. 27 by board trustees meeting at the

IMB's International Learning Center in Rockville, Va.

Platt, 36, pastor of The Church at Brook Hills, a Southern Baptist congregation in Birmingham, will take office effective immediately

as president of the 169-year-old organization, the largest denominational missionary-sending body among American evangelicals.

More than 4,800 Southern Baptist international missionaries serve worldwide.

Platt succeeds former missionary, pastor, and Southern Baptist Convention president

see PLATT on p. 6

Lye tea victim released from hospital

SALT LAKE CITY (BP) — The wife of a Southern Baptist leader in Utah was released from the hospital Aug. 23 after nearly dying 13 days earlier when she took one sip of lye-tainted sweet tea at a Salt Lake City-area barbecue restaurant.

Jan Harding, 67, was released from the University of Utah Health Care's burn center on the 46th anniversary of her wedding to Jim Harding, retired executive director of the Utah/Idaho Southern Baptist Convention. The couple has served together in ministry for 40 years.

"The family came over and we just sat and looked at her," Jim Harding said Monday morning of Jan Harding's homecoming. "We are so happy she's home."

When he learned she was to be released, Harding purchased an oversized banner that said "Happy Anniversary" and hung it in the kitchen. "We came in through the kitchen, so that's the first thing she saw, and she started crying," Jim Harding said.



JAN HARDING

"God is faithful to what He says," Jan Harding wrote Monday morning for her husband to read to a Baptist Press writer. "I'm so humbled by all who have lifted me into God's presence through prayer. As my family has said, 'God's got us' and He thankfully has."

A church member on mission in Kenya heard about it from a church newsletter, and when she asked the people she knew in Kenya to pray, they told her they already knew about it and were already praying.

A woman with family in Russia stopped by the Hardings' home to say people in Russia were praying. A major newspaper in London had carried the story, and many people in the comments section said they were praying.

"The prayers of the world have been heard by God and He answered," Jim Harding said. "God is awesome. That's what I think about it."

"I can't imagine anyone having a more supportive wife," Walker said. "As long as I've known Jim — 17 years now — Jan's been just a rock. She's always there with him. He talks to her. He appreciates her points of view. They're just very much a team. They always work closely together."

ERLC: Baptists should give close examination to Ice Bucket Challenge

NASHVILLE (BP and local reports) — Pro-life advocates are warning that participants in the popular Ice Bucket Challenge, which has raised more than \$50 million to combat the degenerative neurological disease Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS), may be unknowingly supporting embryonic stem cell research that destroys developing human life.

The Southern Baptist Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission (ERLC) in Nashville posted a Q&A on its website Aug. 22 cautioning those considering donations to the ALS Association.

"With the close proximity to a moral dilemma that this situation presents, it is reasonable that Christians would register hesitation and distrust towards collaborating with an organization that harbors no moral opposition to the destruction of unborn life, but instead endorses such activity," wrote Andrew Walker, ERLC director of policy studies, and Joe Carter, ERLC director of communications.

"Christians should also consider whether their contributions are unwittingly undergirding a philosophical worldview at odds with Christian ethics. The taking of innocent life under any circumstance is sinful. Moreover, fostering a culture of life predicated on the destruction of life is contradictory."

The ALS Association in Washington, D.C., the principal charity benefitting from the challenge, said in a statement that it currently sponsors one study using embryonic stem cells, though donors can "stipulate that their funds not be invested in this study or any stem cell project."

Any future embryonic stem cell research will be conducted "under very strict guidelines," the association said.

Walker and Carter noted that there are "pathways to participation" in the Ice Bucket Challenge "that don't require moral compromise," and listed three ALS charities that only fund adult stem cell research which does not require the destruction of developing human life.

Midwest Stem Cell Therapy Center at the University of Kansas Medical Center in Kansas City (<http://www.kumc.edu/msctc.html>).

Adult Stem Cell Technology Center, LLC, in Boston (<https://>

sites.google.com/site/adult-stemcelltechnologycenter/).

■ Anthony Windebank's team at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Mn. (<http://www.mayo.edu/research/labs/regenerative-neurobiology/overview>).

Embryonic stem cell research involves extracting cells from a human embryo that was conceived through in-vitro fertilization but never implanted in a woman's uterus (womb). Such research destroys a days-old human being and has never resulted in clinical treatment of any human affliction.

In contrast, adult stem cell research, which does not destroy human beings, has produced therapies for dozens of medical conditions. Research with induced pluripotent stem cells, which also does not destroy embryos, has shown promise.

Messengers to the 1999 Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting in Atlanta adopted a resolution expressing "vigorous opposition to the destruction of innocent human life, including the destruction of human embryos." The resolution urged a ban on using tax dollars to support embryonic stem cell research and asked private companies to cease any research that destroys human embryos, "the most vulnerable members of the human community."

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From the editor

WILLIAM PERKINS

The Main Thing

As reported elsewhere in this issue of *The Baptist Record*, the trustees of the Southern Baptist International Mission Board on Aug. 27 named a new president to replace the retiring Tom Eliff — David Platt, 36, pastor of The Church at Brook Hills in Birmingham, AL.

In its first week, Platt's election has predictably generated an abundance of opinions and not a few disagreements (in both respects, we are Baptists after all). Many folks think it's the best decision that could have possibly been made at this critical juncture in the life of Southern Baptist missionary-sending efforts, while many others are uncomfortable or downright upset with the choice of Platt.

"I think the missionary force, the young people God is calling... represent one of the greatest forces in Christian history right now," said David Uth, chairman of both the search committee that called Platt and the IMB trustees, in a news release shortly after the trustee vote.

As chairman of the IMB trustees, Uth appointed the search committee and then appointed himself chairman of the search committee. He is senior pastor of First Church, Orlando.

"While the world is becoming more hostile and anti-Christian in some places, it's as if [young missionaries'] passion is growing equally to go to those hard places. That's where we hear young couples saying they want to go, that they want to be radically obedient to what God has called us to do for the nations. The passion is there. How do we equip them and resource them? How do we incorporate strategy that's effective? David is going to address that in a way that's going to bring maximum impact."

Indeed, Platt should appeal to the Southern Baptist Convention's younger leaders-in-waiting. He is relatively young himself and has authored several books that have captured the missions passion of a newer generation. Jimmy Draper, former president of the Southern Baptist Convention, the retired immediate past president of LifeWay Christian Resources, and a lifetime Southern Baptist pastor, has for many years advocated for a more

inclusionary mindset when it comes to these young leaders who feel alienated from the convention in its present state.

While Platt personally and his church corporately have strongly supported the sending of missionaries, they have not necessarily done so in a cooperative way. Cooperative Program giving at The Church at Brook Hills is abysmal, and the International Mission Board depends heavily on Cooperative Program gifts to support the nearly 5,000 missionaries under its commission.

The Church at Brook Hills finances the missions it chooses from its own resources — which they have the absolute right to do — but they have not been as generous toward the missions work of the International Mission Board as reflected by their Cooperative Program giving.

That's par for the course for Southern Baptist leaders, though. Many of the churches pastored by the passionately conservative past presidents of the Southern Baptist Convention have given a pittance over the years to the Cooperative Program — including the convention's current president — while appealing to the people in the pews for higher giving. There are many examples of such duplicity, but that's a subject for another commentary.

There are areas of Platt's career in ministry that hearten his supporter's belief that he is the man for what they see as the coming new era in Southern Baptist missions and in the Southern Baptist Convention as a whole. Likewise, there are people not as sure he's right for the job at this time, as missions giving among Southern Baptists continues to slouch toward a crisis situation.

However, one thing is certain. We cannot fail the missionaries and their families around the world who are facing danger — yea, risking their lives every day — to fulfill the Great Commission (Matt. 28:18-20). In all the white noise generated by the opinions and disagreements back here at home where we live such comfortable spiritual lives, we cannot forsake the missionaries and their families who are on the ground in locations that cannot even be publicly identified because of concerns for their safety.

If we fail them, we fail our Lord and Savior, and that's not something for which I wish to answer on my day of reckoning. Do you?



PLATT

Prepare for 'more normal' time

It doesn't take long when reading the Bible to see that God is impassioned for the plight of His people, such as this passage in Exodus: Then the Lord said, *I have surely seen the affliction of my people who are in Egypt and have heard their cry because of their taskmasters. I know their sufferings, and I have come down to deliver them....* (Exodus 3:7-8).

In the face of an ever-increasing worldwide persecution of Christians, we would be wise to cultivate practices in our churches that might more readily reflect this notion of God's nature. I would like to note three ways you can implement this in the life of your church that will, eventually, lead to three rewards:

■ **Apply biblical truth locally by using what is happening globally.** Every pastor labors to try and faithfully apply the truths of the Bible in a way that will assault his people and spur them on toward faithfulness. They do that by considering their own context and using aspects of it to illustrate or apply that particular truth.

However, considering a different context will help your congregation identify with the plight of God's people around the world. For example, when preaching or teaching through 1 Peter, don't limit the illustrations and applications of persecution only to homosexuality or other American problems. Take them to the checkpoint just outside of Mosul, Iraq, where they are walking with their family and will have to answer for their faith in Christ.

■ **Pray frequently, specifically, and experientially.** If we pray for the plight of God's people in our public services, it is often done in short order or in a sort of peripheral way that does not resonate with the actual circumstances of the world. Don't just pray for the persecuted church when it is on the calendar. Pray for them often so as to engrain it into the minds and hearts of the people.

Praying continually will help your church understand that persecution is going on continually and will model the realities of our brothers and sisters in other countries. When you do pray, pray for specific people in specific places. This will serve to put a face on otherwise formless peoples.

■ **Be meaningfully involved in the nations.** By sending people and resources to Christians in various communities, we make the people at our church more familiar with situations that might have just been another story on the evening news.

As you apply these practices to your par-



Guest opinion

with Nathan Knight

ticular church, you'll probably begin to notice the culture of your congregation changing. Here's what I believe you'll joyfully reap:

■ **Outsiders will be more warmed to your church.** You don't make an international church by simply putting "international" in your name. Making the nations a regular diet of your service will engender internationals to feel more at home.

■ **You will prepare your people for suffering.** Paul told Timothy that "all those who desire to live a godly life will be persecuted" (2 Timothy 3:12). We pumpered American evangelicals have been living a dream for a while, but the normal experience of Christians in history is to suffer for what they believe. We are not entering into a strange time of history, but a more normal one (see 1 Peter 4:12).

Bringing the realities of the world to the fore of God's people will only serve to help believers in their own navigation of an increasingly hostile world.

■ **Your church will grow into another facet of Christ-likeness.** Let's not forget that Christ understood Saul to be persecuting Himself when Saul was assaulting the church (Acts 9:4). The more we knead into the dough of church life — the realities of God's people all over the world, both the good and the bad — the more we will come to understand all that it is to be in Christ.

Cultivating Kingdom kinship is not something that happens overnight. It takes a great deal of time and tears. Slowly, though, the people with whom you do life in the church will come to see and identify with the plight of God's people around the world and have their affections in tune with those of Christ's.

Knight is pastor of Restoration Church in Washington, D.C. This column first appeared at the website of the Southern Baptist Convention's Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission, www.erc.com. His commentary appears courtesy of Baptist Press. Edited for length and style.

The Baptist Record

Editor
William H. Perkins Jr.
wperkins@mbcb.org

Associate Editor
Tony Martin
tmartin@mbcb.org

Layout/Design
Megan Young
myoung@mbcb.org

Advertising
Emily Jones
ejones@mbcb.org

Circulation Manager
Brenda Cuatlebaun
bquatlebaun@mbcb.org

Editor Emeritus
Don McGregor

Baptist Record Advisory Committee:
Dwayne Parker, Flora Paul Sims, Portotac Barry Burris, Terry Carl White, Moridian Billie Buckley, Peral Russell Mord, Sturgis

Postmaster:
Send changes of address to: The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530.

Send news, communication, and address changes to: The Editor, Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530.

Tel: (601) 968-3800
Fax: (601) 252-3330
E-mail: baptistrecord@mbcb.org

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Bolivia cracks down on Protestants, Muslims, others

COCHABAMBA, Bolivia (BP) — Evangelical Christians in Bolivia have begun their battle against new measures that could result in the dissolution of Protestant denominations and other religious groups in the heavily Catholic Andean country.

Organizations that fail to comply with the new government measures will lose their legal standing. In response, the National Association of Evangelicals of Bolivia (ANDEB) on July 30 presented a Petition of Unconstitutionality to the country's Constitutional Tribunal seeking repeal of the measures.

"This law is totally unconstitutional, incongruent with religious liberty as enshrined in Article 4 of the constitution," said Cochabamba attorney Ruth Montaño, who helped frame ANDEB's Petition of Unconstitutionality.

The battle over constitutional rights in Bolivia pits the country's religious minorities against the government of President Evo Morales. The outcome could determine whether Bolivia will continue to enjoy freedom of religion, particularly for the country's 1.6 million Protestant Christians.

Law 351, passed by the Bolivian legislative assembly in March 2013, aims to "regulate the granting and registration of legal standing to churches, religious groups and spiritual beliefs, whose goals do not involve profit."

Morales signed the second disputed measure, Supreme Decree 1987, on April 30. Setting guidelines for implementation of Law 351, it stipulates that any religious organization in the country — Jewish and Muslim communities as well as Protestant churches — must re-

"The defense of freedom of religion is a defense of freedom in its totality... We believe we have compelling support in the constitution and are firmly pursuing a just resolution to this matter."

Agustín Aguilera
ANDEB president

apply for legal standing within the next year.

Article 4 of Bolivia's Political Constitution, adopted under Morales' leadership in February 2009, states, "The State respects and guarantees freedom of religion and spiritual beliefs, in accordance with their worldviews. The State is independent of religion."

Decree 1987 imposes a list of burdensome requirements on religious organizations that seem to contradict the language of Article 4. For example, denominations must file a "notarized listing" of the names, ID numbers, tax certificates, and police files of national leaders, as well as notarized lists of names and ID numbers of their entire membership.

Churches are to provide a schedule of their annual activities "for control and follow-up" by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Failure to produce the required paperwork, or flaws in the reports as determined by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, will result in the cancellation of an organization's legal standing. That in turn would lead to confiscation of church proper-



ties, dissolution of worship services, and closure of training centers, said Montaño, Cochabamba attorney.

"The threat to revoke the documents that grant us legal standing, simply by decision of a state bureaucrat, violates due process," Montaño said. "According to civil law code, legal standing can be revoked only following a trial that finds the organization guilty of breaching the laws of the state."

"The constitution does not grant these officials the authority to revoke our legal incorporation,"

Decree 1987 also requires churches, synagogues, and

mosques to file copies of their bylaws with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. To gain official approval, these documents must include procedures for "the admission and exclusion of members, the rights and obligations of members, an internal disciplinary regimen which includes infractions, sanctions, and procedures," and other such provisions.

Instead of guaranteeing freedom of worship, Montaño said, the regulations "obligate us to operate under a model of administration contrary to our own faith doctrines."

ANDEB expects a ruling from the Constitutional Tribunal by

the end of the year. If judges decide in favor of religious organizations, the contested regulations would be nullified. That in turn would obligate the legislative assembly to pass a law to guarantee freedom of religion and protect the legal standing of churches.

ANDEB officials have met with Morales and members of his cabinet on several occasions to register their opposition to Law 351 and Supreme Decree 1987.

ANDEB president Agustín Aguilera, ANDEB vice president Romualdo Atahuachi, and ANDEB board member Jorge Chávez protested the new regulations in a meeting on July 28 with Minister of the Presidency Juan Ramón Quintana. They told Quintana the evangelical Christian population had mobilized a prayer movement aimed at defeating the regulations' implementation.

After listening to the objections raised by ANDEB leaders, Quintana reportedly agreed that they should petition the Constitutional Tribunal for redress, which they did two days later.

Challenging the new measures "is an action that favors not only evangelical Christians, but every Bolivian citizen," Aguilera told Morning Star News. "The defense of freedom of religion is a defense of freedom in its totality... We believe we have compelling support in the constitution and are firmly pursuing a just resolution to this matter."

Aguilera said the evangelical Christian community plans a public march in defense of religious liberty in all of Bolivia's state capitals on Sept. 6. The demonstrations will also alert the public about the appeal before the Constitutional Tribunal.

Islamic terrorists declare caliphate in northern Nigeria

BORNO, Nigeria (BP) — Boko Haram has established its own government in Gwoza, a Nigerian city it captured three weeks ago by killing perhaps 1,000 residents and overcoming the Nigerian military, a legislator displaced from his home there has confirmed.

The Defense Headquarters of Nigeria has tweeted denials of Boko Haram's claim of an Islamic caliphate in Gwoza, but Peter Biye-Gumta, representative of the Chibok/Dambo/Gwoza Federal Constituency of Borno State, verified reports of the caliphate in the area that had been mostly Christian.

"He confirmed to me that his whole area has been totally overrun and that Boko Haram now has set up a government, their own government in those areas," Adeniyi Ojutiku, an expert in Nigerian relations, told Baptist Press.

Biye-Gumta is working with Ojutiku's grassroots group, Lift Up Now USA, to establish an Anti-Boko Haram

Liaison office in the U.S. to report the struggles of Boko Haram targets and coordinate strategic planning and relief efforts, Ojutiku said.

"Now we are getting from him a perspective that is uniquely different from what we have had before," Ojutiku said, noting Biye-Gumta's status as an elected official in northeastern Nigeria. "[Boko Haram has] actually set up their government."

"I wouldn't be surprised if they get some financial support from ISIS. I would not be surprised at all, because they have escalated their operation, they've become more sophisticated, they have captured more sophisticated weapons, military tanks and armor."

"They are just operating in the manner that is so similar to ISIS."

Boko Haram armies are also growing in size, Biye-Gumta reported. The jihadists may be attracting members from outside Nigeria, Ojutiku said.

"He did tell me that when they invaded Gwoza this time, there were so many of them. There were more than 1,000 Boko Haram jihadists, which is very different from what has been happening. He just managed to escape from his house and he would also probably have been dead by now, but for God's protection. He cannot go back to his area. He can't."

The Nigerian government is denying reports of Boko Haram advances, including the establishment of the caliphate. "That claim is empty," the Defense Headquarters of Nigeria tweeted Aug. 24. "The sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Nigerian state is still intact."

News reports confirm that Nigerian soldiers at times have been forced to withdraw. Boko Haram forced 450 Nigerian soldiers to retreat to neighboring Cameroon Aug. 25 and captured 35 Nigerian police officers at a training camp

in remote northeastern Nigeria the previous week, the international news agency AFP reported.

The government denials are an attempt to save face, Ojutiku said. "The Nigerian government does not want to appear like it has failed the people. They want to appear to be still in charge and be capable of running the government, because if the information gets out that some portions of Nigeria have been captured and taken by Boko Haram, then that is a serious blight to the capability of the president and the government."

"They would rather deny it and also, you just don't know what the political motives are here. Everything has become so complicated, by political intrigues between the ruling government and the people who are trying to take over the reign of government."

"Sometimes you don't even know who is supporting and who is against Boko Haram."

Every so often a similar story will take place that happened in late August. A lady went through a drive through at Starbucks and not only paid for what she got, but then the person behind her paid for the person behind him and one person after another paid the person's bill behind them. You've heard of paying it forward but this I suppose should be paying it backward. Either way, it turns out to be a great blessing. Some years ago an experiment was done at the Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco where not only the drivers but management itself told people when they came to the toll booth window that the person in front of you paid your toll. Then they were asked, "Would you like to pay for the person behind you?" Of course they kept up with who did what and the fascinating conclusion revealed that one out of every ten said yes; 90% just took their blessing and drove on. Now back at Starbucks, it was a little bit different for the chain of people paying the next one and the next one and the next one was 79 consecutive cars, until someone stopped the blessing from flowing.

Now I certainly recognize that not everybody can just go around blessing everybody. In fact, I suppose that nobody has enough resources just to go around paying forward and backward and doing for others just out of the blue, but that is not usually the problem. For instance, with something like Starbucks or even a toll at a bridge being paid for



Paying It Backward

you, you probably showed up there with the resources to take care of some of the expenses. So you could, if you desired to, use what you were going to spend on yourself that someone else took care of to bless someone else. It's at that point that some people say, "Well, this is my money. If they want to do that that's their business, but I don't want to do that. What's mine is mine and I am going to use it on myself."

In that beautiful story that Jesus told that we call The Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37), you run into folks like that, and other variations of it, as a man was just traveling down the road of life and was accosted by thieves who robbed him and beat him up and left him. You know the old saying, that to these people they

thought what is yours is mine and I will take it if I can. It wasn't long, until on that same road, some devout religious people came by and they saw, passed by this poor fellow, and theirs was the position that what's mine is mine and I'm going to hold on to it.

But then there was a man, who when you look at it in the story as Jesus told it, you would have never believed that he was thinking the way he was thinking. That he would do something so out of the norm, outrageously good, that you would just have to stop and wonder where in the world does that come from. For this Samaritan traveling on that road and wanting to help that fellow went over and cleaned up his wounds, picked him up and put him on his own

beast of burden, carried him to a place where he could be taken care of, paid his expenses, said I'll pick up anything else that comes along, and he lived out a concept every one of us should have the joy of experiencing: to touch somebody else's life. His thoughts were what is mine is mine, but I will share it with you to help you on your journey in life.

Is the world full of these folks? Well, you know better than that, but the truth is, there are a lot of people, and I can tell you for sure in our churches there are a lot of people, who have a sensitivity toward God and the blessings that he has poured out upon them and the desire to bless others that is motivated by the Lord Himself. I have met these folks. So many of them pay it backward and pay it forward and pay it sideways and they bless me over and over again.

Here's the question that we all face. What are we doing with the blessings that God has entrusted to us? Are we paying it forward or backward or alongside of us? Are we living with closed, clenched fists holding on to what God has given to us or are we sharing it with others? Virtually everything that you and I have comes by way of someone else blessing us. So today find at least one way to experience the joy that Jesus said is ours by giving. For it was the Lord who said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35).

The author can be contacted at directions@mbcb.org.

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Clue: Q = Y

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: Psalm 70:4

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Matthew 10:27 NAS

September 4, 2014

HouseTops is a Baptist Record supplement produced by the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board's Communication Services.

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EZEKIEL 11:19

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He said, "Come."
So Peter got out of the boat
and came to Jesus.
Matthew 14:23

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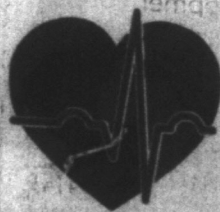
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BAPTIST NURSING
FELLOWSHIP

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Features: Bible Study, Worship, Breakout Sessions, BNF Annual Meeting

Registration Deadline: October 10, 2014

To request a registration form contact Tammy Anderson, WMU office, at tanderson@mbcb.org or 601-292-3323.

Is Your Bible Study for Preschoolers and Children Healthy?

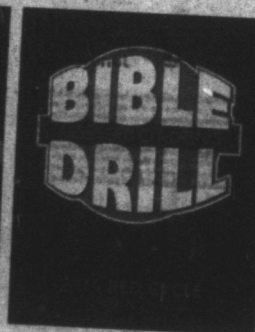
Hosted and lead by Mississippi Sunday School Leaders
along with a panel of local ministry leaders AND

September 18: Bill Emmott, Lead Kids Ministry Specialist, LifeWay Christian Resources
November 13: Clara Mae Van Brink, Preschool Ministry Speaker, Canton, Georgia

Join with us at no cost from wherever you are on your computer/laptop,
phone, tablet, iPod.

Connect with us on September 18 and November 13 at
www.mbcb.org/ssleadertraining

Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, Department of the Cooperative Program, P.O. Box 590, Jackson, MS 39205
800-748-1651 or 601-292-3305, ext. 284



BIBLE
DRILL

Bible Drill/Youth Speakers' Tournament Workshop

Monday, September 15, 2014

West Laurel Baptist Church
1400 West 5th Street, Laurel

For more information contact:
Allan Nix at 601-649-8114

Sponsored by the Discipleship/Family Ministry
Department of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board
800-748-1651, ext. 284, or 601-292-3284.

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MBCB/GuideStone Rep., 601-292-3226.

2015 MBASYC&O Auditions & HEARTSONG



2015 MS Baptist All-State Youth Choir and Orchestra
Rehearsal Camp & Tour Dates
June 9-15, 2015
Auditioned Choir and Orchestra for 9th thru 12th Graders (2013-2014 school year)

HeartSong, Music and Worship Arts Camp
For 4th thru 12th Graders
(2013-2014 school year)
June 23-27, 2015

ONE-DAY Stewardship REVIVAL



An intensive one-day effort to assist churches in analyzing their budget process and choosing new approaches for growing committed stewards. Churches receive customized giving profiles and promotional materials for strengthening their program of stewardship development. Key leaders are trained in an afternoon workshop. Preaching, Bible study, and testimonies make for a day of inspiration as well as practical help.

For more info contact the Stewardship/CP Promotion Dept. at
1-800-748-1651, ext. 347

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Spirit

November 3, 2014

Baptist Women's World
Day of Prayer

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THE WEB SITE
FOR MORE
INFORMATION



OR GO TO:
<http://www.bwwd.org/day-of-prayer>

OR Contact the MS WMU office at the
MBCB at 1-800-748-1651, ext. 319
or 601-292-3319

AMD/SEMINARY EXTENSION DIRECTORS BREAKFAST

Baptist Building Chapel
7-8 a.m.

October 28, 2014

FREE

AMDs and Seminary Extension Directors are invited to this breakfast. Registration is encouraged. Please contact the Pastor/Leadership Development Dept. of the MBCB, cwtaylor@mbcb.org or call 601-292-3305.

Mississippi Council on Bivocational/Small Church Ministries Meeting



Baptist Building Sky Room
3-4 p.m.

October 27, 2014

FREE

For Bivocational/Small Church ministers and their wives. Afterwards, meal will be served at FBC, Jackson, FH West at 4:45 p.m. Please e-mail cwtaylor@mbcb.org or call, P/LD office 601-292-3305, to reserve your place to better serve you.

Pray this day for...

September 5 - 18, 2014

"No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God abides in us and his love is perfected in us." 1 John 4:12

Pray for: **Earl & Ramona Hewitt**, missionaries ministering to Sub-Saharan African Peoples through medicine and church/home outreach evangelism.

Pray for: **Raymond & Cynthia Hodgins**, missionaries ministering to Deaf Peoples through sports evangelism and church/home outreach evangelism.

Pray for: **Jeffery & Lisa Holman**, missionaries ministering to American Peoples through strategy coordination.

Pray for: **Janet Holloway**, missionary ministering to European Peoples through student evangelism.

Pray for: **Ronald & Beverly Holmes**, missionaries ministering to European Peoples through church planting and church/home outreach evangelism.

Pray for: **Kenneth & Kimberly Hathcock**, missionaries ministering to European Peoples through student evangelism and church/home outreach evangelism.

Pray for: **Thomas & Bonnie Hearn**, missionaries ministering to European Peoples through strategy coordination.

Pray for: **Susan Jones**, missionary ministering to East Asian Peoples through student evangelism.

Pray for: **John & Melinda Kyzar**, missionaries ministering to European Peoples through personalization and church/home outreach & evangelism.

Pray for: **Timothy & Rebecca Lightsey**, missionaries ministering to American Peoples through strategy coordination and church/home outreach & evangelism.

Pray for: **Adrian & Jeannie Martin**, missionaries ministering to American Peoples through church evangelism and church/home outreach & evangelism.

Pray for: **Robert & Janice Mooney**, missionaries ministering to European Peoples through strategy coordination and church/home outreach & evangelism.

Pray for: **Daniel & Claudia Hood**, missionaries ministering to Northern African and Middle Eastern Peoples through church evangelism & church/home outreach evangelism.

Pray for: **Millard Jones**, missionary ministering to European Peoples through evangelism.

The IMB missionaries listed in the Housetops prayer calendar are currently active in 2-4 year terms or in career service.

2015 AREA & STATE KEYBOARD FESTIVAL

Thursday, January 29, 2015 — 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.

FBC, 300 N. Church St, Tupelo, 38804

FBC, 202 7th St. N, Columbus, 39703

Tylertown BC, 409 Tyler Ave, Tylertown, 39667

FBC, 431 N. State St, Jackson, 39201

Poplar Springs Dr. BC, 4032 Poplar Springs Dr, Meridian, 39305

Petal-Harvey BC, 600 South Main St, Petal, 39465

FBC, 902 Live Oak Ave, Pascagoula, 39567

FBC, 607 W. 5th St, Laurel, 39442

Friday, January 30, 2015 — 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.

Longview Heights BC, 4501 Goodman Rd, Olive Branch, 38654

Saturday, January 31, 2015 — 9:30 a.m. - noon

FBC, 450 Faith Dr, Grenada, 38901

North Greenwood BC, 615 Grand Blvd., Greenwood, 38930

For more information contact the Church Music Department at the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board at
1-800-748-1651, ext. 267, or
601-292-3267



11/4/94
Miss Alicia Martin
Parents: Tom & Cynthia
NAMB - Las Vegas

11/19/96
Mr. Taylor
Parents: R & C
American Peoples Group

11/5/96
Mr. Campbell
Parents: T & G
European Affinity Group

11/30/03
Mr. Joseph
Parents: T & G
European Peoples Group

11/7/02
Mr. Jon Thomas
Parents: J & C
Restricted

11/13/06
Mr. Mack
Parents: C & J
American Peoples Group

11/15/96
Miss Marissa
Parents: David & Laurie
American Peoples Group

11/15/03
Mr. David
Parents: D & M
European Peoples Group

Encourage an MK with a card!

FOR SECURITY, cards will be forwarded. Please send all to: MBCB WMU MK Birthdays, PO Box 530, Jackson MS 39205. PLEASE NOTE: Church members may send a package of cards together; cards do not have to be sent individually to the WMU. Individual cards do not need postage stamps when sent as a package to MS WMU. Please be sure your cards arrive in WMU one month prior to the first date on this birthday list.



HOUSE TOPS

Lunch will be served.

1-800-844-3254
406 B Orchard Park Dr.
Ridgeland, MS 39157

PLATT

cont. from p. 1

Tom Eliff, 70, who has served as IMB president since March 2011. Eliff had asked the agency's trustees earlier this year to begin an active search for his successor.

Eliff and his wife Jeannie plan to return to retirement in their home state of Oklahoma.

The author of the bestselling books *Radical* and *Follow Me*, among others, Platt has been pastor of 4,500-member The Church at Brook Hills since 2006. He also founded and leads *Radical*, a ministry that exists to serve the church in accomplishing the mission of Christ.

Radical provides resources that support disciple-making in local churches worldwide, organizing events and facilitating opportunities through multiple avenues, all aimed at encouraging followers of Christ in God's global purposes.

Platt has traveled extensively to teach the Bible alongside church leaders and missionaries throughout the United States and around the world. He and his wife Heather have four children.

"We talk all the time at Brook Hills about laying down a blank check with our lives before God, with no strings attached, willing to go wherever He leads, give whatever He asks and do whatever He commands in order to make His glory known among the nations," Platt said in a letter to his church, released Aug. 27.

"Over these past months, God has made it abundantly clear to both Heather and me that He is filling in that blank check in our lives and family with a different assignment. Along the way, God has used the elders of our church to affirm His call, and today He used the leadership of the IMB to confirm it."

Platt's passion for people

lost without Christ and his calling to reach them inspired members of the IMB trustee search committee, according to search committee chairman David Uth, who is also IMB trustee chairman. He is pastor of First Church in Orlando, FL.

Uth said the trustees are excited about Platt's influence among thousands of Southern Baptists and other evangelical leaders through The Church at Brook Hills, the Radical network, and other arenas.

"We weren't looking for a man who knew how to talk about it. We were looking for a man who was doing it — and using the influence he had to affect the nations," Uth said. "When we considered what Brook Hills was doing to send couples [to the mission field] and to engage people in the pew in kingdom work, we felt like those were clues to how effective he was at mobilizing and getting people to follow the vision that God had given him."

Platt, who recently saw two members of his Birmingham congregation appointed to IMB service, particularly hopes to use his influence to multiply the involvement of local Southern Baptist churches for missions in a way that glorifies God and His Word.

"I want to see the IMB, first and foremost, exalting Christ as the center of the church and mission," Platt said. "He's the One who's going to accomplish the Great Commission. He's given us the joy of being involved with Him in it."

That means in everything the IMB does, we've got to be in tune with His Word, His plan, His Spirit, reflecting His character. I want to take whatever influence the Lord has given me, and will give me in this position, to sound the trumpet among followers of Christ — Southern Baptists and non-Southern Baptists — to say missions is not a compartmentalized program.

"The local church is the agent God has promised to bless for the spread of the Gospel to the nations. The role of the IMB is to equip and empower and encourage the local church to do this."

In 2013, The Church at Brook Hills gave \$100,000 to the SBC Cooperative Program Allocation Budget through the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee; \$25,000 to the Cooperative Program; \$12,500 to the Alabama Baptist Children's Home; \$15,000 to the Birmingham Baptist Association; \$300,000 to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for International Missions; and \$325,000 to the International Mission Board in special designated gifts, for a total of \$777,500, or 8.9 percent of the church's total giving for the year, to Alabama Baptist and Southern Baptist causes.

Projections for 2014 are: \$175,000 through the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee; \$25,000 to the Cooperative Program; \$15,000 to the Alabama Baptist Children's Home; \$68,000 to the Birmingham Baptist Association; \$300,000 to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for International Missions; and \$718,000 to the International Mission Board in special designated gifts, for a projected year-end total of \$1,301,000, or 13.8 percent in total projected church giving.

The Platts are natives of Atlanta. David Platt received two bachelor of arts degrees from the University of Georgia in Athens and master of divinity, master of theology, and doctor of philosophy degrees from New Orleans Seminary.

Before becoming pastor at Brook Hills, he served as an assistant professor of expository preaching and apologetics at New Orleans Seminary and as staff evangelist at Edgewater Church in New Orleans.

Submission Guidelines

The Baptist Record is pleased to publish news and photographs of special events that take place in cooperating churches of the Mississippi Baptist Convention. News items and/or photographs depicting benefits and activities for secular or outside organizations will not be published.

Preferred method: news may be submitted electronically to the e-mail address below, and must be included in the message segment of an e-mail form. Secondary method: news may be typewritten or neatly printed on 8 1/2 by 11-inch paper and mailed. All articles must be received in writing; no articles will be accepted over the telephone. Due to ever-present virus threats, no text attachments will be accepted. Photograph attachments in JPEG format are permissible.

Please make articles concise. Include the who, what, when, where details of the story, along with a contact person's address and telephone number.

Photographs must be submitted electronically

via e-mail, as attachments in JPEG format. Hard copy photographs mailed through the postal service will not be accepted. Photographic must be clear, sharp, and well-lighted. Photographs must depict people. No landscape, building, or object-only photographs will be printed. Photographs containing inappropriate gestures and objectionable clothing will not be published. Cell phone photographs and other low resolution items that do not reproduce well on newsprint are generally not publishable.

There is no guarantee that news items and/or photographs will be published, and unsolicited material will not be acknowledged or returned. All news items are subject to editing, and all photographs are subject to cropping. News items and/or photographs can be published one time only. Deadline for submitting news is one week prior to requested publication date. Articles that are not date-sensitive will be published on a space-available basis. These guidelines are not meant to be exhaustive.

Submit news to The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. FAX: (601) 292-3330. E-mail: baptistrecord@mbcb.org.

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Need a light?

Jesus said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness but will have the light of life." (John 8:12)

Simply share the following prayer with God in your own words:

1. Lord, I admit that I need you. (I have sinned.)
2. I want forgiveness for my sins and freedom from eternal death. (I repent.)
3. I believe Jesus died and rose from the grave to forgive my sins and to restore my relationship with you. (I believe in Jesus.)
4. By faith, I invite Jesus Christ into my life. From this time on, I want to live in a loving relationship with Him. (I receive Christ as my Savior and Lord.)

"But as many as received him, to them he gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in his name." (John 1:12)

If you make a decision for Christ today, contact a local Southern Baptist church for spiritual guidance.

Who is Jesus? • Hebrews 1:1-4

Hebrews 1:1-4 • Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, 2 but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world. 3 He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, 4 having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs.

The book of Hebrews is "a tonic for the spiritually debilitated." The comprehensive theme of the Epistle to the Hebrews is that of the absolute supremacy of Christ - a supremacy which allows no challenge, whether from human or angelic beings. Christ is superior to angels, the patriarchs, the prophets, and kings and the covenant he brought is superior to the old. In Christ the new order, which is perfect and eternal and by which therefore the old is done away, has been inaugurated." (Hebrews, P. E. Hughes, 1)

Through the centuries, ideas of authorship have been recycled and ultimately we don't know who wrote it. "Commentators have made cases for the writer being Paul, Apollos, Barnabas, Luke, Peter, Jude, Stephen, Silvanus (Silas), Epaphras (Epaphroditus), Philip the Evangelist, Priscilla, Mary the mother of Jesus, Clement of

Rome, Aristion, and others." (Hebrews, Constable, 1)

The textual content, including a mention of "Timothy," in 13:23, and no mention of the destruction of the temple, seems to indicate a date of writing before A.D. 70.

The recipients were primarily Jewish Christians and possibly priests judging by the "priestly" theme used through the book (Acts 6:7). The writer assumed that they were very familiar with the institutions of Judaism and the warnings against

turning away from Jesus Christ back to the Old Covenant also imply this identity. (Hebrews, Constable, 2)

God Speaks (Vs. 1-2) The one true God of the universe uses two types of revelation to disclose who He is, general and special. General is seeing God in the design of the created order (stars, moon, sky, seasonal change, humanity). Special is more distinct, such as God's Word coming directly from the prophets and finally, coming in the flesh in Jesus Christ. God spoke directly to the patriarchs and the monarchs through

prophets but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son. His Son, is of course, Jesus Christ, in whom the fullness of God dwelled. Last days refers to beginning of the end of time, when Christ will return and great consummation of the age comes to a close. In these Last Days, God came in Jesus to speak directly to us and redeem us for the glory of the Father. God speaks to His creation through the prophets first, then finally his Son and He is personally active and engaged with us and the universe.

God Revealed (Vs. 2-4) Christ has been appointed to inherit all that Father shall give Him and was the agent of creation, Colossians 1:16, "For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him." Hebrews makes it very clear that Christ's importance cannot be over-exaggerated. He is the radiance...the exact imprint...he upholds the universe by the Word of his power. "When you hear that the Son is the glory of the Father's glory, bear in mind

that the glory of the Father is invisible to you until it shines forth in Christ, and that he is called the very image of his substance because the majesty of the Father is hidden, until it shows itself as impressed on his image." (Hebrews, Hughes, 43)

After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high. "This he did within the course of human history when, Aquinas says, "he offered himself on the altar of the cross as a sacrifice to God in satisfaction of the punishment to which, man because of his guilt, was subject." (Hebrews, Hughes, 47) John 19:30, he said, "It is finished," and he bowed his head and gave up his spirit. The sins of the world, now fully paid for, Christ, takes his place.

Having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs. Dr. Stott helps us to understand the distinction and why it is so great. "Angels were sent by God to release prisoners, to instruct preachers, to encourage believers, to judge blasphemers, and to help travelers. But inspiring as all these events were, the angels concerned were but messengers; that was their name and that was their function. Christ has a name superior to the best of angels. He is far more than a mere messenger. He is the Son of God. (Hebrews, Stott)

Hazzard is pastor of Woodland Church, Columbus.



Explore the
with Shelby Hazzard

Connected in Christ • Ephesians 2:17-22

As members of a ballet troupe in their hometown, Gracie and Elissa are preparing for their annual presentation of "The Nutcracker Suite." John and Patty enjoy the camaraderie and service opportunities afforded them through their community hospital's auxiliary. And at the local YMCA, Mike's membership allows him to swim laps in the heated pool, and do strength training in the well-equipped gym.

Membership. The word signifies connection with like-minded people. Since God created us as social beings, we need relationships with others, be it in the business world, our schools, the community, or the church. But do we sometimes look to these "connections" in self-seeking ways? What benefits will we derive from such involvement? If we "pay our dues", what's in it for us?

Our church membership, however, requires a totally-different mindset: we're called to be givers, not takers; to seek avenues of service instead of expecting to be served (in John 13:3-15, we see Jesus modeling this attribute). Dissecting some themes about church membership in Paul's letter to the church at Ephesus, we'll glean new insights into what this divine connection offers - and requires of - each believer.

Connected: it's a beautiful word, don't you think? It symbolizes inclusion, security, affinity, mutual goals and such. Referring to our relationship with God, the connec-

tivity concept is used often in the Bible: as sheep of the good shepherd (Psalm 23 and John 10), as branches of the vine (John 15), as parts of a body (1 Corinthians 12), and as living stones comprising a spiritual house (1 Peter 2). Examine your relationship with fellow church members. With which concept do you most-readily identify?

The theme of this study of Ephesians is "Connected: My Life in the Church".

Over the next several weeks, we'll discover ways to become believers who are: connected in Christ, connected in unity,

connected in growth, connected through words, connected in service, and connected through prayer. In this week's lesson, six brief verses will drive home this focal point: church membership is a privilege made possible through Christ. I hope you'll take time to ponder the other Scriptures mentioned above. As you study, allow these relationship models to weave their way into your thinking.

The Asbury Bible Commentary, speaking of the uniqueness of God's new com-

munity, directs our attention to the "you" and the "we" in these verses: "Reared on Hebrew interpretations, [Paul] shared the typical Jewish perspective on Gentiles, the people outside the covenant with Israel.... How desperate the Gentiles' condition, according to the Jews. Gentiles were aliens, unable to apply for citizenship, excluded, and thus without spiritual rights."

The "you", of course, referred to the Gentile believers, and the "we", to those of Jewish descent. Paul reminds the Gentiles of their past in terms of their spiritual legacy

- they had none. Jews looked on them as "uncircumcised", "foreigners", "without hope and without God in the world" and as being outside the realm of "citizenship in Israel" (vs. 11-12 NIV). Quite a desolate position, spiritually speaking! However, Jews who'd not embraced the Savior actually faced a similar predicament. Verse 17 clearly declares the "good news of peace" (HCSB) was proclaimed to those "far away" (Gentiles) and to those who were "near" (Jews). The "us" and "we" in verses

3-4 show the universality of sin. Jews and Gentiles alike needed a Savior!

Christ's death and resurrection brought together these two groups, giving them both "access to the Father by one Spirit" (vs. 18 NIV). He called the unified body "members of God's household" (vs. 19). What a revolutionary idea for these two distinct cultures! Now consider fellow believers on your church roll. With countless diversities of backgrounds, you are a unit - a structure - with Christ being the cohesive chief cornerstone (vs. 20; Psalm 118:22). As such, members are being fashioned according to God's plan, preparing them to be God's holy sanctuary; His dwelling place! This is not a static position. The word "being" in verses 21-22 signifies an ongoing process.

So how can these truths be fleshed-out? Here are some ideas: View church membership as a gift to be cherished, and thank the Lord for it. Think about the "being built" process; look for ways your spiritual giftedness can be implemented to strengthen the "building." Meditate on the blessings church membership affords you, and ask God to lead you to someone this week who needs a local church connection. That someone might just be waiting for your personal invitation!

Maniscalco is a member of Lemoyne Boulevard Church in Biloxi.



Bible Studies for Life
with Ann Maniscalco



Revivals & Homecomings

► **Victory Church, Brookhaven:** Homecoming, Sept. 7; special music, 10 a.m.; worship, 11 a.m., followed by fellowship meal. Eric Monk, speaker; Gloryland, music.

► **Verdaman Church, Kemper County:** Homecoming, Sept. 7; services, 10:30 a.m., followed by potluck lunch; Albert Wilkerson, speaker; Dennis Robinson, pastor.

► **Sulphur Springs Church, Conestoga:** Revival, Sept. 7 - 11; Sun., 11 a.m. and 7 p.m. nightly. Tommy Anderson, speaker; Danny Harrison, music.

► **New Prospect Church, Brookhaven:** 125th homecoming, Sept. 14; Sunday School, 10 a.m.; memorial and worship

services, 10:45 a.m., followed by covered dish lunch; Ryan Thurman, speaker; Butch Dear, music; Willie Welch, pastor.

► **Rolling Hills Church, Milledgeville:** Revival, Sept. 7 - 10; Sun., 10:30 a.m. and 6 p.m.; Mon. - Wed., 7 p.m.; Wednesday services followed by refreshments

and fellowship; Donald Rusty Kuhn, speaker; Geri Grubbs, music; Barry Lee, pastor.

► **Macedonia Church, Lee County:** Revival, Sept. 7 - 9; Sun., 10 a.m.; 7 p.m. nightly; Rickey Blythe, speaker; Dexter Griggs, music; Terry Faulkner, pastor.

Just for the Record



CAIRO CHURCH, ECRU, held a baby dedication Aug. 27. Participants were Jim, Kelly, and Tori Matthews and Joel, and Crystal and Edda Cate Matthews and Matt, Nikki, and Mason Moore. Rick Griffin, pastor.

ENTERPRISE CHURCH, CLARKE ASSOCIATION, ordained J.D. Simpson and Andy West as deacons Aug. 24. Shown are Peyton Simpson, J.D. Simpson, Lena Claire and Kelly Simpson, and Kaylin West, West, and Landry, Jamie, and Sarah West.



SMITHVILLE CHURCH, SMITHVILLE, celebrated a note burning Aug. 10 for its new facilities, built after the destruction of the church April 27, 2011.



FIRST CHURCH, RICHTON, held a back to school Bridge the Gap gathering. Shown are members of the Golden Circle Sunday School class and members of the church's student ministry.

In other Church News:

➤ **Cross Roads Church, Pelahatchie**, is hosting an open house

Sept. 7, 4 - 5:30 p.m. for their new Fellowship/Education building and newly renovated Student Ministry Center.

➤ **Fellowship Church, Ballfontaine**, is hosting a gospel singing with the Greens Sept. 5, 7 p.m.



The mission groups of **ARLINGTON CHURCH, BOGUE CHITTO**, held their annual recognition program Aug. 24. Matthew Green, pastor.

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